

**Community and In-Home Options to Institutional Care
For the Elderly and Disabled (CHOICE) Board
November 17, 2016
Indiana Government Center South – Conference Room 22
402 W. Washington St., Indianapolis, IN**

CHOICE Board Members in Attendance: Jean Macdonald, Sen. Jean Leising, Rep. Ed Clere, Judith Schoon, Andy Weidekamp, Jim Leich, Joan Cuson

CHOICE Board Members Absent: Lynn Clough, Sen. Jean Breaux, Beth Schoenfeld, Dorian Maples, Rep. Robin Shackleford, Prudence Twigg

Visitors in Attendance: Stacey Kahre, Laura Holscher, Vickie Medlock, Orion Bell, Kristen LaEace, Michelle Stein-Ordonez, Joe Hemersbach

Staff in Attendance: Yonda Snyder, Debbie Pierson, Willie Poindexter

Chairperson Jean Macdonald called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and asked for approval of the September 15, 2016 minutes. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes, which was approved unanimously by the Board. Jean Macdonald had the two new board members introduce themselves: Joan Cuson has been a member of the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) for almost 30 years, and Jim Leich, who is soon to be retired from LeadingAge Indiana after 21 years.

Division of Aging Update: Debbie said the members should have received the Annual report via email asked if Board members had any questions or comments. A typo was discovered at the bottom of page 4; it should be “were” instead of “was.” After questions from the Board, the Annual Report was approved unanimously by the Board, with the correction.

Debbie said the CHOICE pilots were initiated in January 2015. The two technical items that changed with the pilots is the addition of consideration of assets and the cost-share formula. There is also a different eligibility standard that expands who can be eligible to participate in the CHOICE program. Four AAAs were selected to participate in the program: Area 1 in northwest Indiana, Area 4 in Lafayette, Area 13 in Vincennes, and Area 14 in New Albany. All have participated in the pilot program for almost two years. The pilot instituted a culture change and a shift on how people are assessed and how we look at individuals requesting assistance. The program is moving more towards needs-based person-centered; looking at the person’s situation and looking first to their own resources, not just financial and looking at short-term interventions versus long-term service plans.

Laura Holscher is the Director of Generations (Area 13) at Vincennes University. Laura said Debbie explained how the program came to be. The key to culture change has to do with OPTIONS counseling. OPTIONS counseling is a process; it is not a singular event that occurs one time but happens over a period of time. Laura proceeded with a slide presentation and explained they worked with the state and the Division of Aging over the last year to come up with a concise definition to explain what OPTIONS counselors do. Laura explained through slide presentations how they currently work with the people who call in versus how they worked with them in the past. In the past when a call came in they were screened for CHOICE eligibility. If they were eligible, they were placed on a waiting list. When money became available, case managers would call or go out to see the individuals to assess them for services if they were still eligible for CHOICE. And the waiting list was updated annually. Now, when referrals come

in, they are assessed for needs first and then talk about eligibility. They immediately go to needs-based care and what the individual needs. The OPTIONS counselor works with the individual to identify resources, be it family, friends, church etc., to help the client. They are able to meet the person's needs and are diverted from the waiting list. Laura reviewed several cases to demonstrate how OPTIONS counseling comes into play to meet clients' needs and keep them off the waiting list.

Laura said they've had a lot going on with multiple initiatives at the state, and trying to make all the pieces fit together. They would like to extend the pilot to July 2019 and add two additional pilots to the program. Laura opened the floor to discussions.

Debbie Pierson said two things the pilot legislation did was to add the inclusion of assets in the cost-share formula and eligibility. The wins of the pilots are the needs-based assessment, the person-centered approach and the flexibility of funding. Some challenges include the lack of consistency, process, and procedures and tools. They want to keep it as flexible as possible and let each pilot explore what works for them, but there is a need for some consistency. They are trying to strike a balance between consistency of tools, consistency of process and flexibility to address each person's centered need.

Debbie went over the waiting list data so Board members could see the trends. The Division is conducting trainings to work on the problems they are having to get everyone on the same page along with their new software programs.

Jean said at 2:55 p.m., she wanted to prioritize the agenda and talk about the retreat and do the statute review (bylaws) at the retreat. Jean said she, Lynn, and Debbie, will put together some suggestions and send them out to the Board.

I4A Update: Kristen LaEace said one thing to keep in mind about the legislation related to CHOICE is that they don't have to designate the number of new pilots, they could just give authority to the Division to designate the pilots.

They had their Elder Justice convening and about 100 people were in attendance. Kristen said she would share their public policy agenda in January. Kristen said because of the new payment system, the area agencies have large account receivables across the system—several million dollars. Debbie said this issue is not confined to the Division of Aging but they are working on trying to get things moving.

Kristen distributed educational packets and said these would help Board members keep up to speed on what is happening in the industry.

Rep. Ed Clere mentioned travel reimbursement for the Board. Jean said vouchers for members will be mailed to members with accompanying paperwork to complete for future meetings. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.